

REMARKS

Claims 1-43, as amended, remain herein. Claims 32-43 are presently withdrawn. Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 10, 12, 13, 16-18, 20, 21, 16, 28-30 have been amended. Support for the amendments may be found throughout the specification.

This Amendment is believed to place this application fully in condition for allowance, and surely in better condition for any appeal. Thus, entry of this Amendment and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested.

1. Claims 1-7 and 26-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Rouviere FR 2 797 579 in view of Grunert et al. U.S. Patent 3,030,959 and Smith et al. U.S. Patent 4,995,402. The Office Action states that Smith teaches a puncture instrument in which the needles are all connected and removal of a puncture needle pulls the next needle to the puncture position.

Applicants' claims 1 and 26 recite a puncture instrument housing a plurality of puncture needles, wherein the puncture needles are connected in such a manner that removal of a puncture needle pulls the next puncture needle to the puncture position.

A person of ordinary skill in this art would not have been motivated to combine Rouviere, Grunert and Smith. The housings in Smith are part of an integral housing piece. A user pulls on a used housing to expose the next housing by breaking off the used housing. Such a system would not work in Rouviere, because the needle of each housing is located in the rear portion of the preceding housing unit. Thus, breaking off one housing would break the needle of the next housing.

Claim 3 is further patentable because Rouviere does not include an elastic deformation

member. The Office Action alleges that Rouviere's part (F1) is the elastic deformation member. However, Rouviere says nothing about (F1) being elastic. In addition, none of Rouviere, Grunert and Smith discloses an elastic deformation member of one puncture needle that elastically grips a front end of a next puncture needle.

Thus, none of Rouviere, Grunert, or Smith teaches or suggests applicants' claimed invention. In addition, Rouviere, Grunert and Smith disclose nothing that would have suggested applicants' claimed invention to one of ordinary skill in the art. There is no disclosure or teaching in any of Rouviere, Grunert, Smith or otherwise in this record, that would have suggested the desirability of modifying any portions thereof effectively to anticipate or suggest applicants' presently claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

2. Claims 8-17, 19-22, 24 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Grunert in view of Rouviere and Smith.

Applicants' claim 8 recites a puncture needle cartridge which contains a plurality of puncture needles, wherein the puncture needles are connected in such a manner that removal of a puncture needle pulls the next puncture needle to the puncture position.

As discussed above, none of Grunert, Rouviere, or Smith discloses applicants' claimed puncture needles which are connected in such a manner that removal of a puncture needle pulls the next puncture needle to the puncture position.

Thus, none of Grunert, Rouviere, or Smith teaches or suggests applicants' claimed invention. In addition, Grunert, Rouviere, and Smith disclose nothing that would have suggested

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applicants' claimed invention to one of ordinary skill in the art. There is no disclosure or teaching in Grunert, Rouviere, Smith or otherwise in this record, that would have suggested the desirability of modifying any portions thereof effectively to anticipate or suggest applicants' presently claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

For all the foregoing reasons, all claims 1-31 are now proper in form and patentably distinguished over all grounds of rejection cited in the Office Action. The PTO is hereby authorized to charge or credit any necessary fees to Deposit Account No. 19-4293. Should the Examiner deem that any further amendments would be desirable in placing this application in even better condition for issue, he is invited to telephone applicants' undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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